

## MAKE ROOM FOR THE BIG GUYS

Almost anything that you can purchase today was delivered to the store by a truck. Usually a pretty big one at that. The size and capacity of the commercial trucks on the road today can be mind boggling.

As you motor down the road in your econo-cart 4 banger luxury sedan, you can feel the giant gust of wind as an 18 wheeler passes you and you are seated slightly below the tops of those huge tires.

Take a moment to think about the potential crushing force of the truck that just passed. Many trucks on the road today weigh up to eighty thousand pounds and permit loads reach even much higher gross vehicle weight. If just one axle rolls over your vehicle, it can have a crushing force of over thirty-six thousand pounds.

As we share the roads with these giants, try not to vent your anger when there is no room to pass. That trucker wants to get where he is going as much or more than you do. Most of the guys and gals driving these rigs are far better trained at handling vehicles than Joe Motorist who got his license after a test taken many years ago, and has not had any refresher courses or certifications.

According to the NHTSA, commercial truck drivers have the lowest rate of recorded crashes (14%), DWI convictions (1%), speeding convictions (24%) and recorded suspensions or revocations (7%) on record.

Who has the worst record you may ask? Motorcycleists, but that isn't what we are talking about here.

So what am I trying to point out here? They are big, they are many, and they outweigh us many times over.

Driving defensively is never more important than when in the company of the big rigs on the road. You may be able to stop your passenger car in 180 feet at highway speed, but that heavy truck behind you is going to take far greater braking distance. So maintain a large distance whenever

possible between you and the truck behind you. If he tailgates you, get out of the way. Never maintain the same speed when along side of a big rig. The driver just might forget you are there and change lanes. If you tailgate a truck, and are in his blind zone, anything can happen. How do you determine his blind zone? If you cannot see both mirrors on the cab of the truck, he cannot see you.

Sharing the roads with large trucks breaks down to very notable statistics. In 2008, nationwide, 23,000 truck drivers lost their lives in accidents. (26%). But those same crashes resulted in 64,000 (71%) deaths in other vehicles. Serious injuries in those same crashes resulted in 677 (16%) truck drivers hurt but 3139 (74 %) of the other vehicle were injured.

So, give them some room, give them some thought and give them a brake. After all, they might just be delivering your dinner tonight. And of course, stay "always vigilant".



### THIS IS A TEST!

**This is a hypothetical test question. The results will be divulged in the November 2009 Newsletter. This is the last question.**

#### The Question:

You are driving in the country. You are literally miles from anyone. And you come upon a 4 way stop sign with unlimited visibility in all directions. What will you do?

Please respond with your simplest answer.

email your answers to:  
[wallyjaynes@hawaiiintel.net](mailto:wallyjaynes@hawaiiintel.net)

**THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER: LETS HEAR FROM YOU:  
SEND YOUR COMMENTS, TIPS AND IDEAS TO:  
Lt Col Wally Jaynes, CAP Deputy Director of Safety  
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